

The Gordon Neufeld Approach: Making Sense of Children



Lisa Knight, B.A., CCLS

lknight@cw.bc.ca

BC Children's Hospital ~ Child Life Department

Outline

- What is child life?
- Why expressing emotions is important.
- Why understanding attachment is useful in patient interactions.
- How do we engage attachment instincts in our patients?

What is Child Life?

The child life department strives to make hospitalization a more positive experience.



Our Main Goals

Assisting with coping.

Promoting normal development within a hospital setting.



...so you *PLAY* with patients?

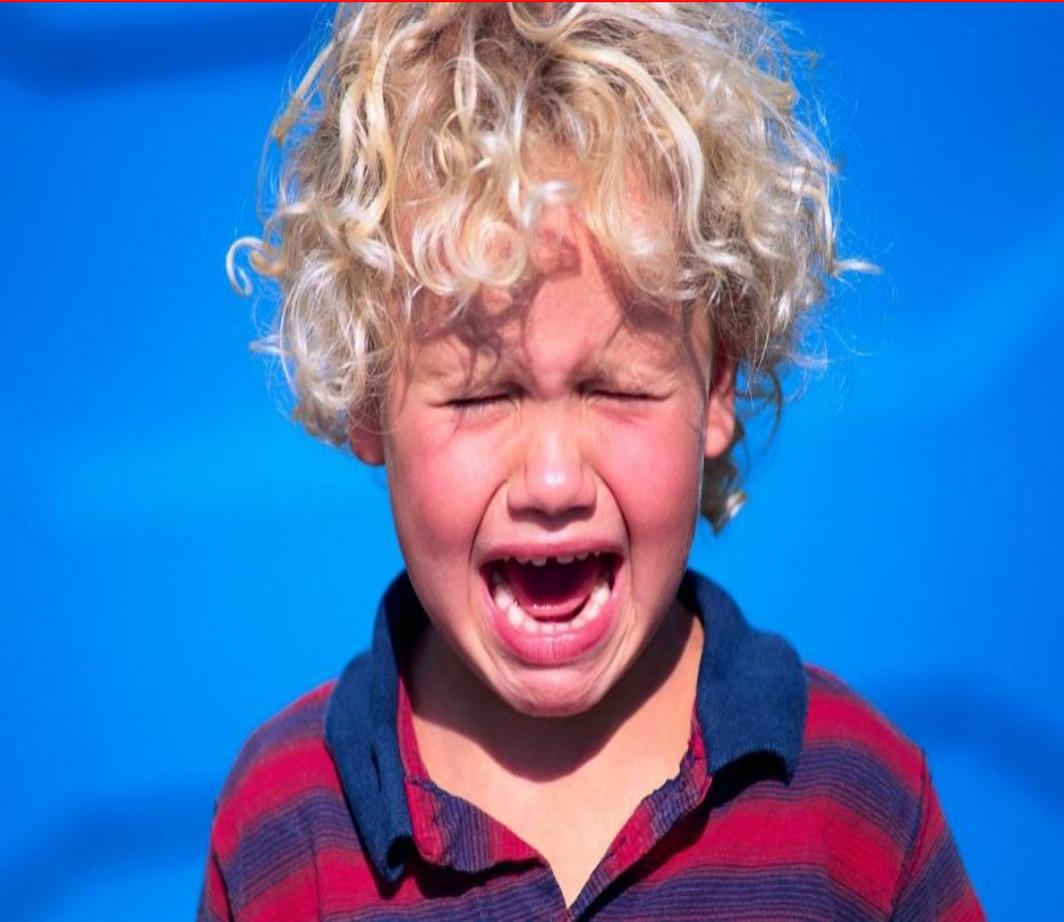
Play is a main intervention to reach therapeutic goals. Play is important for all children, but especially for those in hospital.



Dr. Gordon Neufeld



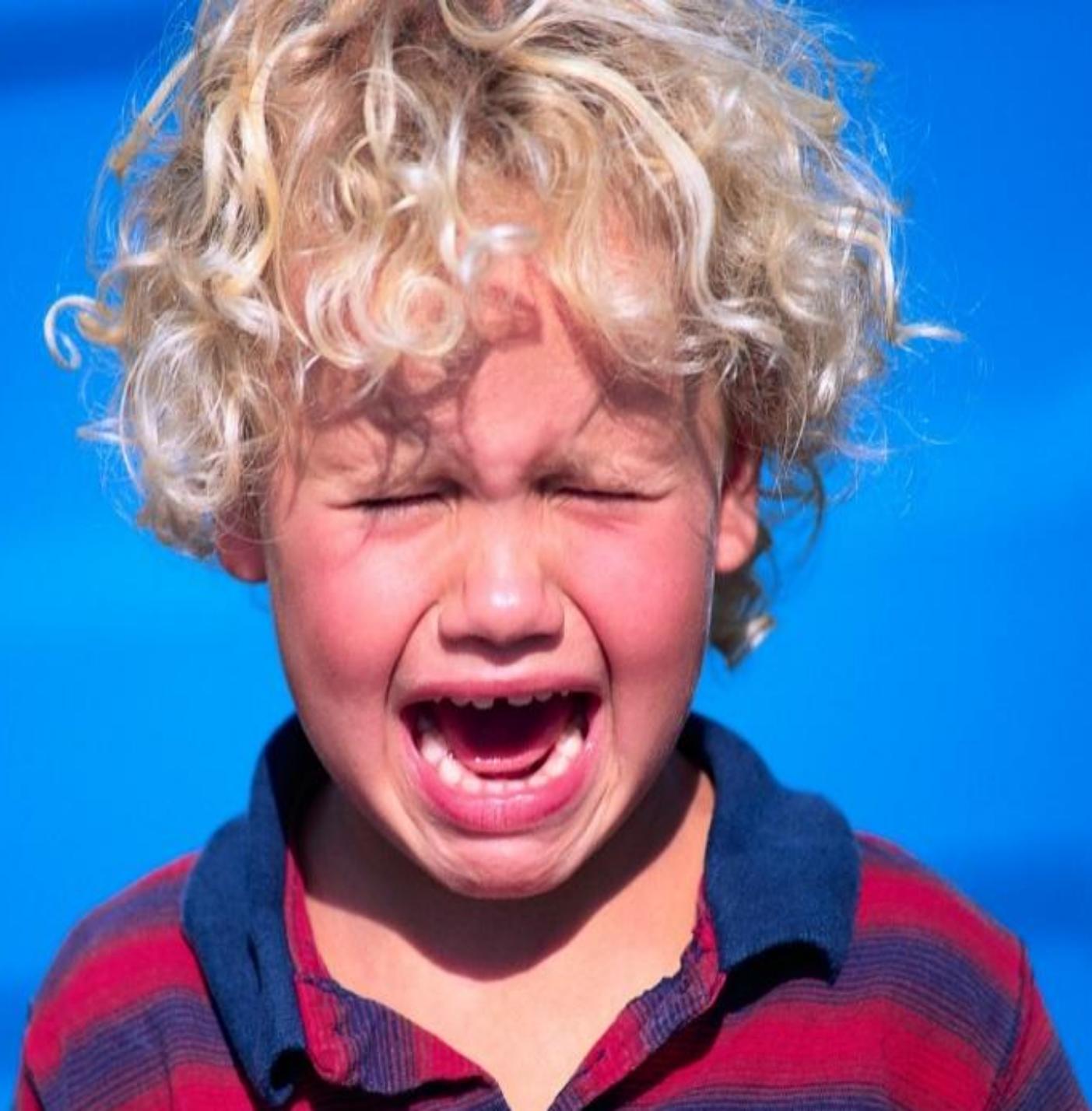
- Vancouver-based clinical psychologist.
- Internationally known for his work with child development.
- neufeldinstitute.com



What is your
instinct of what this
child needs?



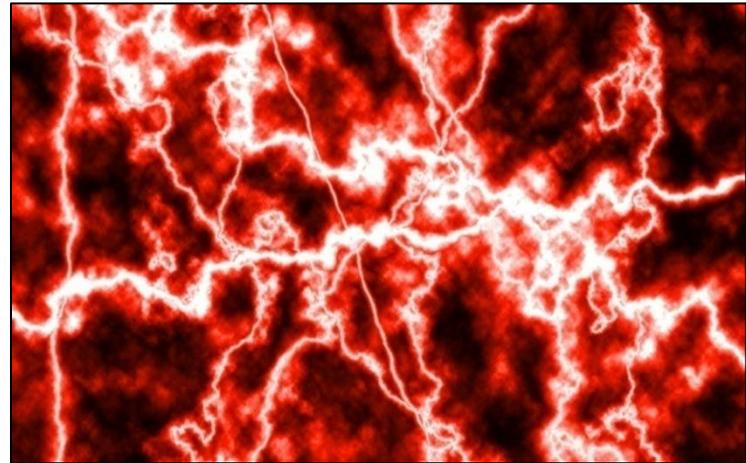
What would be
your reaction if
you had a
patient with
this
expression?



What is Emotion?

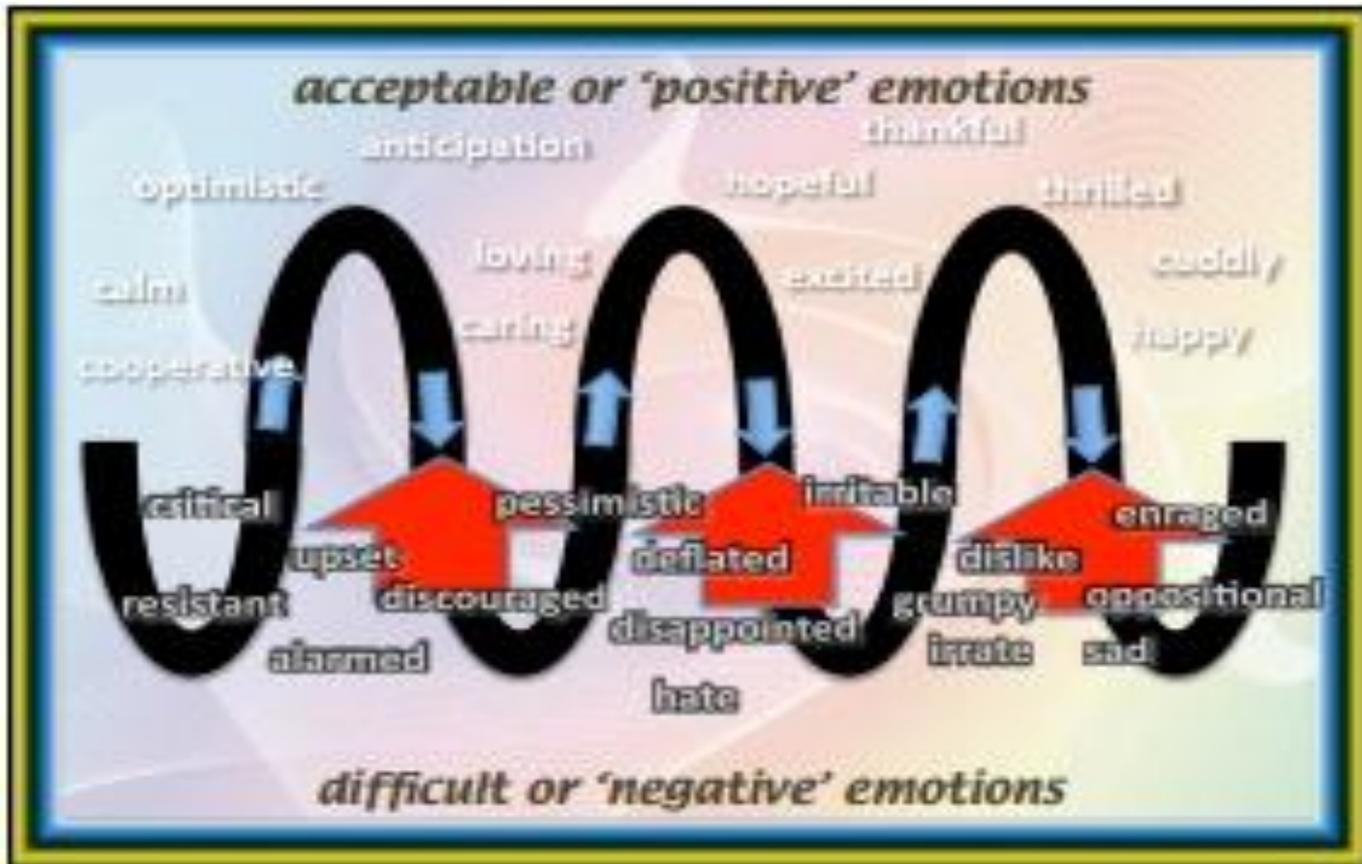
(Neufeld, 2013)

- To be stirred up
 - It happens to us
 - It is irrational
- To be moved
 - Is meant to move us in ways that would serve us



The Action Potential of Emotion

(Neufeld, 2013)



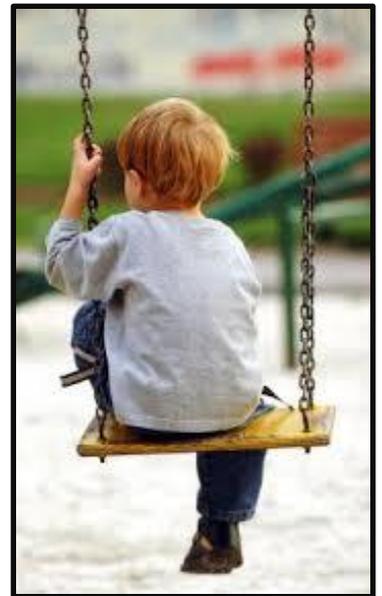
Keys to Emotional Health and Maturity

(Neufeld, 2013)

1 – Emotion needs to be expressed

2 – Emotions should be felt

3 - Self-control requires inner
development



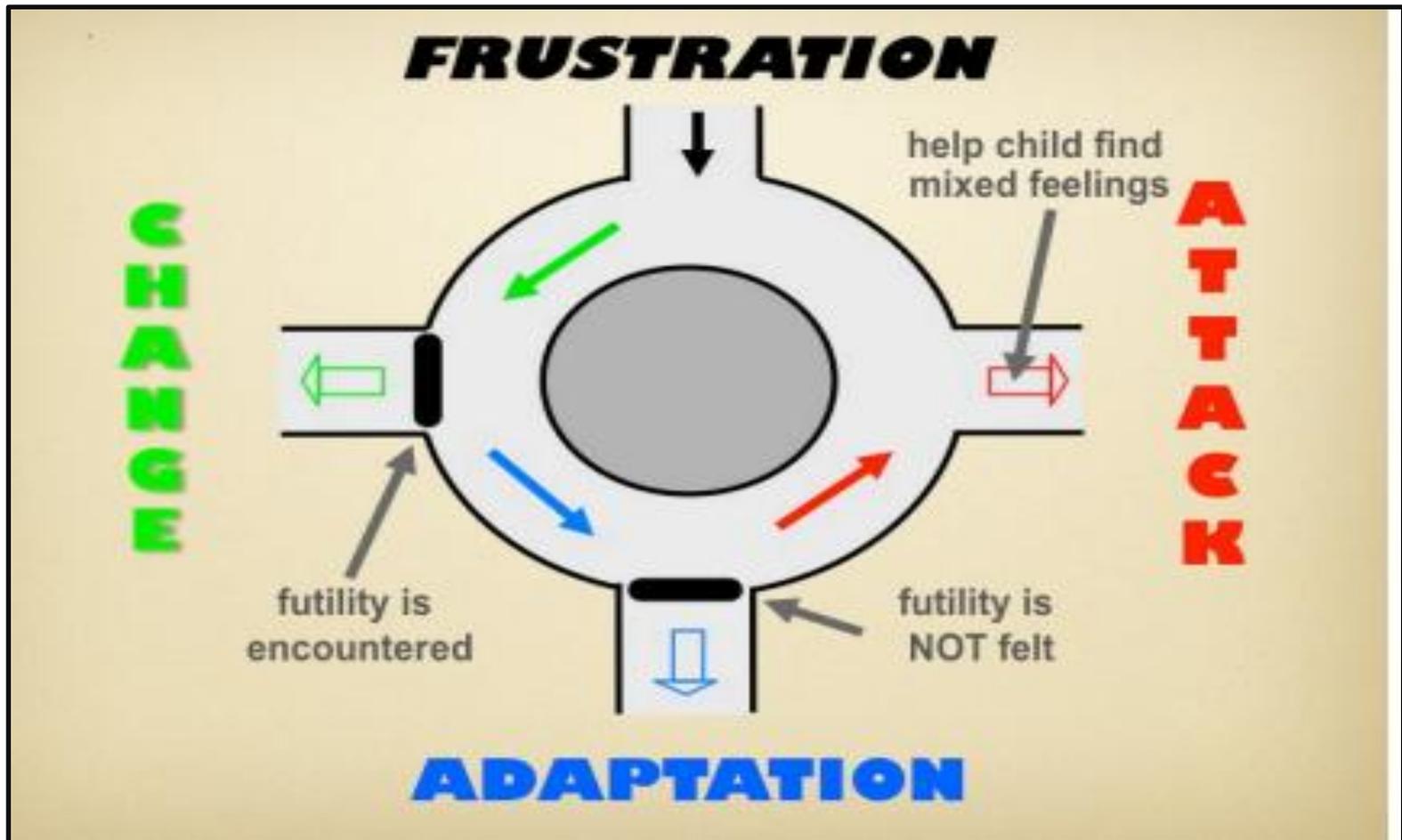
Five Steps to Emotional Health (Neufeld, 2013)

- Expressing
- Naming
- Feeling
- Mixing
- Reflecting



Traffic Circle

(Neufeld, 2013)



What a Child Doesn't Need to Express their Emotions

- Teachable moments
- Us to solve their problems
- To reflect on their “problem behaviour”
- To reflect on emotions they haven't felt or named



What Does a Child Need From Us?

- An invitation
- Normalization
- A vent









Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



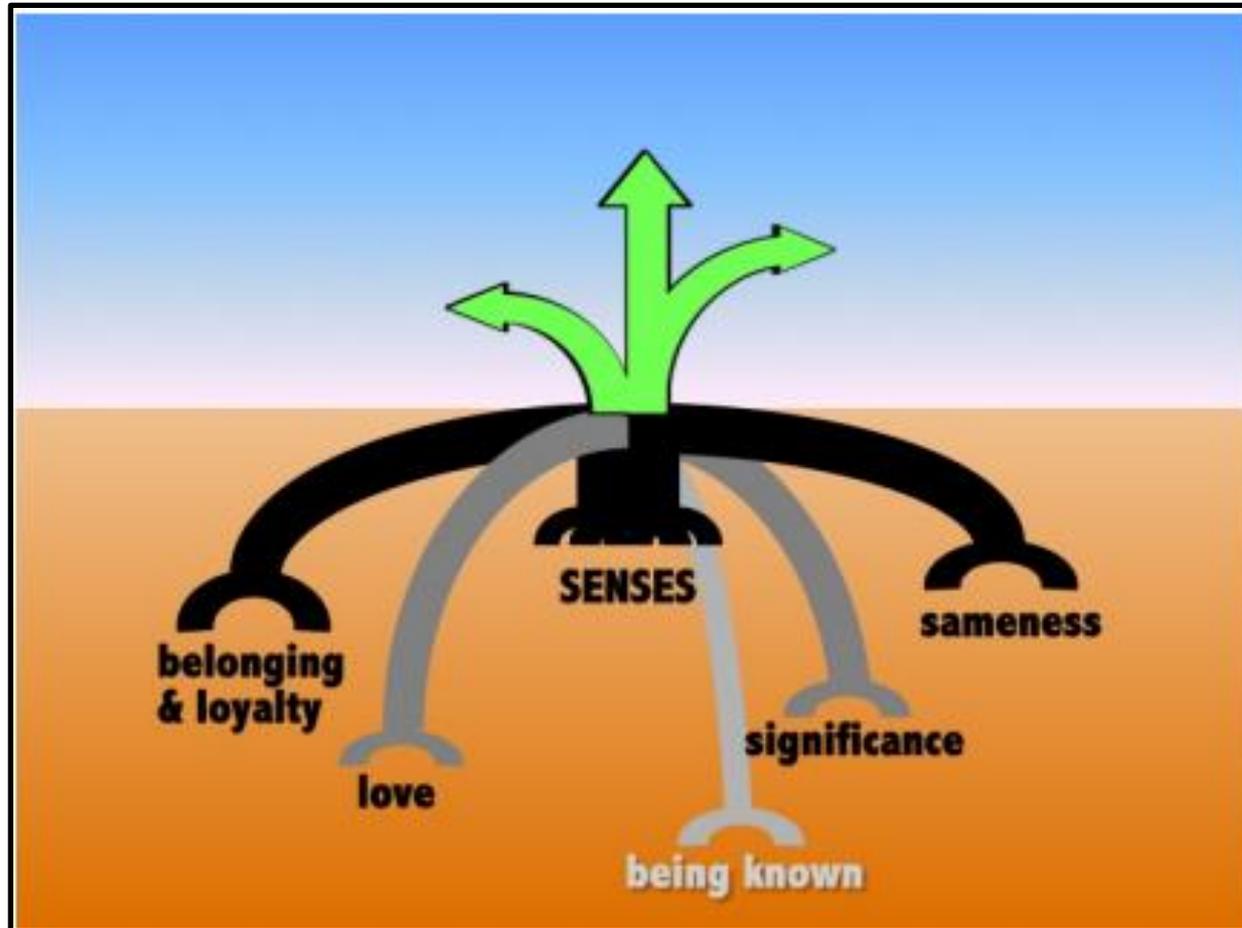
Attachment



...that drive or relationship characterized by the pursuit and preservation of proximity.

Roots of Attachment

(Neufeld, 2013)



The Key to Satiation

(Neufeld, 2013)



The provision
must be
greater than
the pursuit.

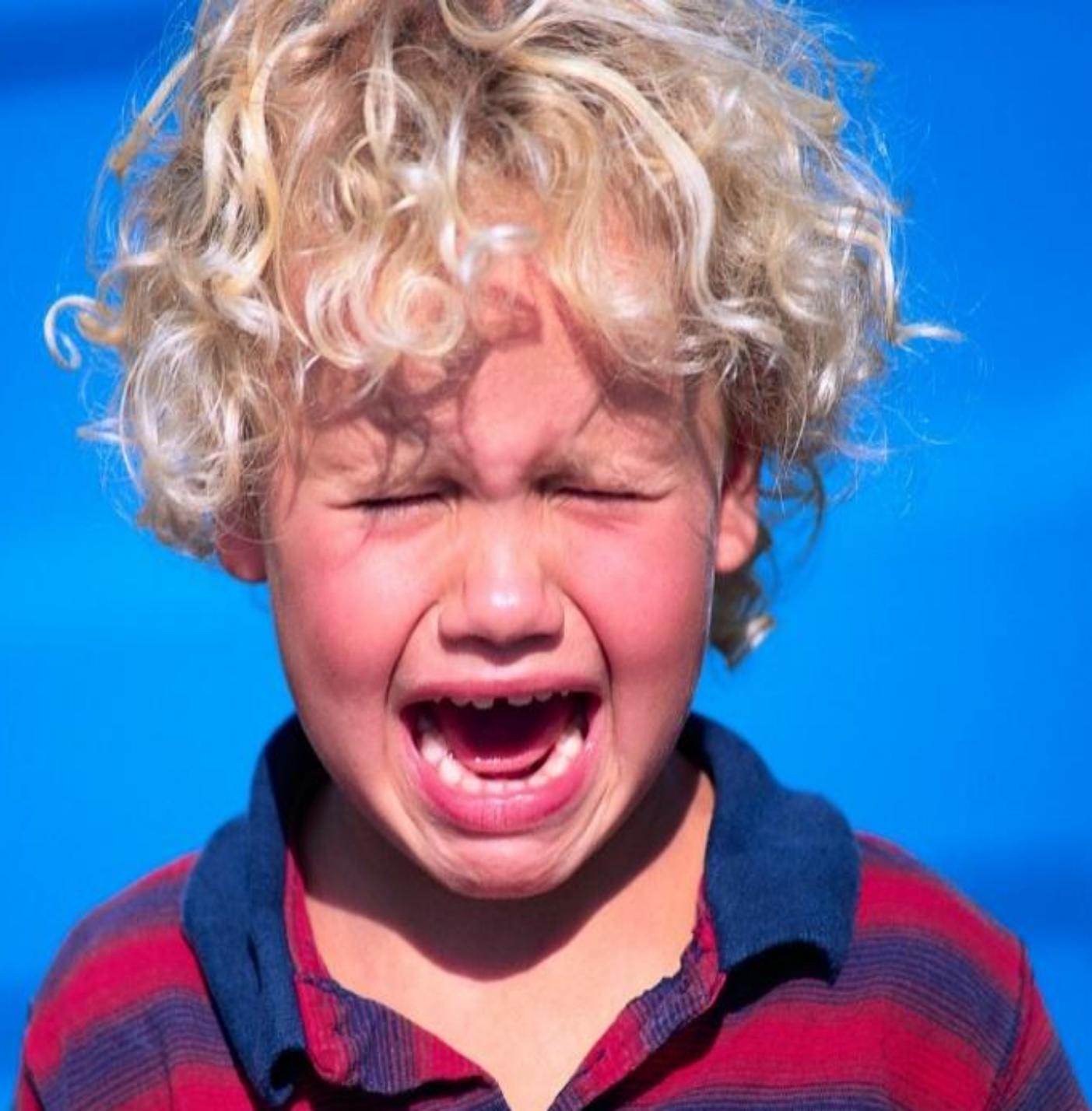
Counterwill

- An instinctive, automatic resistance to any sense of being forced.



Engaging the Attachment Instincts

- Collect before you direct
- Assume the Alpha Role
- Match Make





What Questions
Do You Have?

References

Mate, G., and Neufeld, G. (2013). *Hold on to your kids: Why parents need to matter more than their peers.*

Toronto, Ontario: Vintage Canada.

Neufeld, G. (2013, September, 24). Heart matters: What to do with a child's feelings. (On-line address). Retrieved from the Neufeld Institute at https://neufeld.adobeconnect.com/_a830185085/p4xztf9qke2/?launcher=false&fcContent=true&pbMode=normal

Neufeld, G. (2013, October 22 – 2014, March 27). Intensive One: Making sense of children (Course at Neufeld Institute). Retrieved from the Neufeld Institute at <http://neufeldinstitute.com>